



Thru the Bible in 2012

The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the Word of our God endures forever. Isaiah 40:8

Ladies for Jesus Tuesday Bible Study Ponderings

Readings for January 1, 2012 – January 8, 2012

Emailed: Sunday, January 8, 2012

For our ponderings, consider the questions listed below in regards to the things we have read so far.

- **(Genesis 3:24)** It was evident by the following that Adam and Eve had broken their relationship with God:
 - They allowed the devil to convince them that their way was better than God's way.
 - They became self-conscious and hid from God.
 - They tried to excuse and defend themselves.

To rebuild our relationship with God we must reverse these steps:

- We must stop making excuses and defending ourselves for the wrongs we have done.
- We must repent and stop trying to hide from God.
- We must become convinced that God's way is better than our way. Recall, as humans, our natural reactions will be to follow the way we are *convinced* is correct.

In what ways do you need to rebuild your relationship with God?

- **(Genesis 4:6-7)** Cain's first reaction in his heart when God rejected his sacrifice was the beginning of his downfall in his relationship. After Cain's gift was rejected, God gave him the chance to right his wrong and try again. God even encouraged him to do this! But Cain refused, and the rest of his life is a startling example of what happens to those who refuse to admit their mistakes. How do you react when someone suggests you have done something wrong? Do you take an honest look at yourself before God?
- **(Genesis 9:20-23)** Many are shocked to see that Noah gets drunk after displaying that he was such a great hero of faith. Certainly this could be considered a poor example of godliness to his sons. Perhaps this story is included to show us that even godly people can sin and be bad influences to their families. However, Ham's mocking attitude revealed a severe lack of respect for his father and for God. Sometimes we take on this same mocking attitude when we spread the word about sins of others in our lives. Whether they are considered to be godly in our eyes or not, they are beloved by God. Out of respect for God, we shouldn't mock HIM by spreading the word about the sins of others. Has this attitude infiltrated your life?

- **(Genesis 11)** The tower of Babel was a great human achievement, a wonder of the world. Why did God object to it? While this showed great achievement, it also was built because the people wanted to build a monument for themselves rather than God. We may build monuments to ourselves (expensive clothes, big house, fancy car, important job) to call attention to our achievements. These may not be wrong in themselves, but when we use them to give us identity and self-worth, they take God's place in our lives. We are free to develop in many areas, but we are not free to think we have replaced God. What "towers" have you built in your life?
- **(Genesis 13:12-13)** Good pasture and available water seemed like a wise choice to Lot at first. But he failed to recognize that wicked Sodom could provide temptations strong enough to destroy his family. Have you chosen to live or work in a "Sodom?" Even though you may be strong enough to resist the temptations, other members of your family may not. While God commands us to reach people in the "Sodom" near us, we must be careful not to become like the very people we are trying to reach.
- **(Genesis 12; 15; 17:2-8)** Why did God repeat his covenant to Abram over and over? It seems that each time God is bringing the covenant into focus for Abram as a way of preparing Him to carry it out. In chapter 17, God revealed to Abram several specific parts of His covenant: (1) God would give Abram many descendants; (2) many nations would descend from him; (3) God would maintain his covenant with Abram's descendants; (4) God would give Abram's descendants the land of Canaan. As God makes this come into focus, He changes Abram's name to Abraham. In what ways is God trying to bring the promises of your life into focus? As He does, not only has He changed your identity but He is nurturing you to be more Christ-like. Are you allowing this change in your life?
- **(Genesis 21:6-7)** At the birth of Isaac, Sara was elated and declared that the Lord had brought her laughter. She even says that her laughter will be contagious because all that hear about it would laugh with her. Sara's doubt, worry and fear over the years had taken away the peace she could have felt in God's wonderful promise to her. A peace that could have been just as contagious as her laughter during times of joy. The way to bring peace to our troubled hearts is by focusing on God's promises. Trusting Him to do what He says will bring about a peace that others may not understand. However, they can benefit from realizing it is the kind of peace that comes only from God. What promises has God given you that you have given up on? Are you waiting for the promise with the peace that He is faithful and He will provide? Recall, He is the Author of all miracles. Even if it takes a miracle to fulfill the promise He has given, He will fulfill it!!